DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 328 645 UD 027 905

AUTHOR Bossone, Richard M., Ed.; Polishook, Irwin H., Ed.
TITLE Corporate Education Endeavors. Proceedings of the Conference of the University/Urban Schools National Task Force, (12th, Rancho Mirage, California, November 30-December 1, 1990).
INSTITUTION City Univ. of New York, N.Y. Graduate School and Univ. Center.
PUB DATE 91
NOTE 99p.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cooperative Programs; *Corporate Support; *Educational Change; Education Work Relationship; Elementary Secondary Education; *Politics of Education; *School Business Relationship; *School Restructuring; *Urban Education

ABSTRACT

These proceedings of a conference on corporate programs that support urban educational reform include 11 papers that focus on the importance of education and academic achievement to the business community, and the need for a national political agenda to promote urban school reform. The following presentations describe existing enrichment programs that approach school reform in close cooperation with local communities: (1) "What Phillip Morris Is Doing" (G. L. Knox, III); (2) "What Proctor & Gamble Is Doing" (R. L. Wehling); (3) "What U S WEST Is Doing" (J. J. Prancan); and (4) "What Pacific Telesis Is Doing" (T. S. Donahoe). The following presentations describe plans to speed the rate of school reform: (1) "What Is Planned by Citibank" (P. M. Ostergard); (2) "What Is Planned by Union Carbide Corporation" (N. W. Deibler); and (3) "What Is Planned by National Business Organizations" (F. S. Edelstein). The following presentations discuss what is needed to ensure education reform from a variety of perspectives: (1) "A Teacher/Union Leader's Perspective" (A. Shanker); (2) "A Superintendent's Perspective" (P. McWalters); (3) "An Executive's Perspective" (A. S. Alexander); and (4) "A Legislator's Perspective" (G. K. Hart). A list of participants is included. (FMW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Richard Bossone
Grad. School CUNY

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PROCEEDINGS:

The Twelfth Conference of the
University / Urban Schools National Task Force

Corporate Educational Endeavors

November 30 and December 1, 1990
Rancho Mirage, California

Edited by Richard M. Bossone
and Irwin H. Polishook

The Graduate School and University Center
of The City University of New York
1991

In memory of

Dr. Harold M. Proshansky

colleague and friend
distinguished president of the
Graduate School of CUNY
and member of this
Task Force

PREFACE

Success has always been the standard by which Americans judge their public institutions. This is not just a borrowing from the private sector, where the bottom line for businesses is always profits that guarantee their survival. We have always been an optimistic people, almost taking progress for granted, rarely contemplating the dark side of failure as more than a temporary setback. The current misfortunes of the American public schools, especially those in large urban population centers, are no longer ignored as a temporary or even a remediable condition. There are even those who believe the public school dilemma is one that can only be overcome by destroying this distinctive national tradition.

This Conference focused on "Corporate Educational Endeavors," representing in each paper the importance as well as the breadth of the business concern with academic success. What came across clearly, particularly in the vigorous discussion prompted by the presentations, was the recognition that business' needs for a better educated workforce are essential to the quality of our democratic order. Plainly, the American business community is prepared to give every assistance to the transformation of the public schools.

None of the corporate executives who participated in the Conference believed the mission of reform was beyond attainment; none expressed resignation at the slow pace of change given the herculean job ahead. The

major themes of systemic reform, corporate respect for educators and their burdens, and the necessity of a national political agenda to promote educational improvement are present throughout these Proceedings. Doubtless a special note of urgency is evident in the remarks of Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers, whose advocacy for teachers is combined with his succinct demand that every aspect of public education be open to change in the interest of the survival of public education itself.

At a recent congressional hearing, William H. Kolhberg, president of the National Alliance of Business, observed that the "failing education system" will only be changed when Americans "see educational issues in a national context and as a national problem." We should be aware that as the context is broadened the stakes become more consequential. The education-business partnership must be seen as an engagement that will require the restructuring of the American public school as we enter the fin de siècle. As yet, no one is certain regarding what the transformed public school system will be.

R.M.B.

I.H.P.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	ii
PARTICIPANTS	vi
CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT THEY ARE	
What Philip Morris Is Doing George L. Knox, III	1
What Procter & Gamble Is Doing Robert L. Wehling	8
What U S WEST Is Doing Jane J. Prancan	15
What Pacific Telesis Is Doing Thomas S. Donahoe	20
CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT IS PLANNED	
What Is Planned by Citibank Paul M. Ostergard	26
What Is Planned by Union Carbide Corporation Nancy W. Deibler	33
What Is Planned by National Business Organizations Frederick S. Edelstein	42

Page

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT WILL ENSURE EDUCATION REFORM

A Teacher/Union Leader's Perspective
Albert Shanker 49

A Superintendent's Perspective
Peter McWalters 55

An Executive's Perspective
Anne S. Alexander 64

A Legislator's Perspective
Gary K. Hart 70

AN AFTERWORD Eugene R. Wilson 79

TWELFTH CONFERENCE OF THE UNIVERSITY/URBAN SCHOOLS NATIONAL TASK FORCE

CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS

Chairman

Dr. Richard M. Bossone
University Dean for Instructional Research
Graduate School and University Center
City University of New York

Participants

Anne S. Alexander
Vice President, Education Programs
AT&T Foundation

James Baughman
Superintendent
San Jose Unified School District

Barbara V. Bell
Principal
Joe Hall Elementary School, Miami

Stephen Berg
President
Saber Group, San Francisco

Edward L. Blunt
Director, Educational Programs
Ohio Bell

Clark T. Colvin
Vice President, External Affairs
Cajun Electric Power Cooperative, Inc.

Nancy W. Deibler
Assistant Director, Public Issues
Union Carbide Corporation

Lloyd B. Dennis
Executive Director, Public Affairs
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

Elizabeth Dickey
Consultant
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

Thomas S. Donahoe
President
Pacific Telesis Foundation

Anne T. Dowling
Director, Corporate Contributions
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

Frederick S. Edelstein
Senior Fellow, Center for Excellence in Education
National Alliance of Business

Edith B. Everett
Vice Chairperson, Board of Trustees
City University of New York

Henry J. Everett
President
Lexington Associates, New York City

Stephanie T. French
Vice President, Corporate Contributions and Cultural Affairs
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

David A. George
President
College of the Desert, Palm Desert

Jon S. Gibby
Special Assistant to the Chairman
Unocal Corporation

Leon M. Goldstein
President, Kingsborough Community College
City Unversity of New York

Paul L. Gorsky
Regional Vice President
National Alliance of Business

Donald R. Greene
President
The Coca-Cola Foundation

Gary K. Hart
State Senator
State of California

Fred M. Hechinger
Senior Consultant and former President
New York Times Company Foundation, Inc.

Irving G. Hendrick
Dean, School of Education
University of California, Riverside

Guilbert C. Hentschke
Dean, School of Education
University of Southern California

Ellen Hershey
Program Officer
Stuart Foundations

William P. Hungerford
District Manager, Training Administration
Bellcore

Donald G. Jacob
Director, State Government and Civic Affairs
Pfizer, Inc.

Cheri Jasinski
Chief Operating Officer
Intellimation, San Barbara

Arthur Jefferson
Professor, School of Education
University of Michigan

Charles A. Kane
President
Riverside Community College

Mae Kleinman
Community Adviser, Adult Literacy
Riverside, California

George L. Knox, III
Vice President, Public Affairs
Philip Morris Companies, Inc.

Lawrence R. Lassek
Managing Partner
Dimensions, Santa Barbara

Gay S. Lynch
Librarian
The Buckley School

Gerald W. Lynch
President, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York

Peter McWalters
Superintendent
Rochester City School District

Douglas E. Mitchell
Professor, School of Education
University of California, Riverside

David A. Nasby
Director, Community Affairs and
Vice President, The General Mills Foundation

Ken G. Nelson
Chairman, Education Finance Committee
Minnesota House of Representatives

Michael T. Nettles
Vice President for Assessment
University of Tennessee system

A. J. Noble
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Superchip Space Technologies, Santa Barbara

Paul M. Ostergard
Vice President and Director of Corporate Contributions
Citibank, N.A.

Linda K. Peek
Special Assistant, Corporate Affairs
Coca-Cola Company

Nancy J. Perry
Associate Editor and Los Angeles Bureau Chief
FORTUNE

Irwin H. Polishook
President, Professional Staff Congress
City University of New York

Sheila S. Polishook
Associate Professor of History, Queensborough Community College
City University of New York

Jane J. Prancan
Executive Director
U S WEST Foundation

Jane R. Rand
National Education Advisor
Jostens Learning Corporation

Alan S. Rosenberg
Chairman
The New York Alliance for the Public Schools

Mary DePiano Rothlein
Dean, Planning and Development, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
City University of New York

Albert Shanker
President
American Federation of Teachers

David Thursdale
President and Producer
Thursdale Productions, Los Angeles

Nancy S. Ticktin
Vice President and Secretary, Corporate Contributions
Bankers Trust Company

Eleanor S. Turner
Research Assistant, Graduate School
City University of New York

Dale Van Natta
Director, Civic and Community Relations
TRW

Octavio J. Visiedo
Superintendent
Dade County Public Schools

Edmond L. Volpe
President, The College of Staten Island
City University of New York

Robert L. Wehling
Vice President, Public Affairs
Procter & Gamble Company

Gloria Weiner
Weichert Realtors
Larchmont, New York

Max Weiner
Dean, Graduate School of Education
Fordham University at Lincoln Center

Napoleon B. Williams, Jr.
Assistant Counsel
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund

Eugene R. Wilson
President
ARCO Foundation, Inc.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT PHILIP MORRIS IS DOING

George L. Knox, III
Vice President
Public Affairs

Philip Morris has joined with other corporations to advance the cause of education reform. Our corporation's aims are a little different than other business-school collaborations, combining a sense of community service with self-interest in a better prepared workforce. Two of our most recent major education grants are of importance, not necessarily for their success, but because in the process of making them Philip Morris learned a few lessons worth passing on. These lessons have to do with the changing philanthropic climate, the increasing politicization of the nation's education system and its reform movements, and America's cultural history of separation, if not suspicion, between business and education. These observations surely benefit from the advantage of hindsight; our new insights were not possible six months ago.

In 1988, Philip Morris involved large numbers of our senior management in a review of our contributions program. Our basic objective was to give greater definition to the program, to make it more strategic as the company and the contributions budget grew.

A decision to intensify our efforts in the world of education was one of several outcomes of the review. This move was warmly received within the company because our managers were increasingly concerned with the nation's education systems and were beginning to question the preparedness

of our future workforce. This concern was coming not just from corporate planners and education professionals, but from front-line business personnel. We ultimately responded with two of the largest education grants we have ever made, one in Milwaukee and the other in the District of Columbia.

A one million dollar, five-year grant to the Milwaukee Youth Initiative was made in response to a proposal that argued that the problems affecting high-risk young people in the community were also affecting the public school system. The Milwaukee Youth Initiative Committee identified six schools with concentrations of endangered students, where rates of drug abuse, absenteeism, and teen pregnancy were high. Our grant supports a major collaborative effort that intervenes in the lives of these students and their families.

Through a joint effort of the Milwaukee Public Schools and the Department of Health and Human Services, a model project is underway in which a variety of services are provided to students and their family members on an immediate and highly personal basis. These services might involve a middle of the night visit by a social worker because of a family dispute. They might include arranging for emergency medical services, or, turning to the more mundane, they might mean simply helping a family buy a needed refrigerator. Although the number of participating families is deliberately small, we believe this model project has great promise because it is an intensive and closely monitored program.

In the case of the Milwaukee grant, the Youth Initiative staff made an effective argument to Philip Morris on a theme that matters to us: strengthening families. They told us that available state, city, and

county funding fell short of what they needed to do the job. They asked for our help, and we stepped up. Some concerns did arise at Philip Morris about how this grant would be received. But one of our subsidiaries, the Miller Brewing Company, is headquartered there. Milwaukee is one of our "hometowns," and with the close involvement of Miller's people, we were able to identify and resolve early some of the difficulties we confronted in making the grant. The goodwill our effort subsequently generated was typical of our corporate philanthropy experience.

In the District of Columbia (D.C.), we made another five-year, million dollar grant. This aid to the D.C. Committee on Public Education enabled it to launch family learning centers and to enhance a pilot project in a select number of schools. We particularly endorsed the Committee's commitment to bring the work of Yale psychiatrist James Comer into the D.C. schools. Our one million dollars extends the existing Comer project through various activities intended to increase family involvement in schools. These activities include adult literacy classes for parents, computer-assisted instruction that allows students and parents to work alone or together on lessons, instruction in nutrition and food preparation, and supplementary student tutoring.

As in Milwaukee, the D.C. Committee came to Philip Morris and made a strong case for its need to extend the Comer project. We saw an opportunity to help urban families expand educational opportunities for students otherwise at the highest risk of failure, and we responded.

The Philip Morris grants in Milwaukee and the District of Columbia share an effort to promote education reform through programs that reach out to assist student families directly. The key difference between the two

grants is that without a plant or presence in D.C. we lacked a pool of people connected both to us and the community. As our D.C. project developed, it ran into some unanticipated trouble. The grant became both a surrogate issue for conflicts within the system and a political opportunity for some. In essence, a vocal few on the school board objected to taking "tobacco money." Once their point was made, however, a similar grant made by another tobacco company at about the same time was accepted without controversy. Philip Morris became a target for protests not directly related to the education partnership we had sponsored. This was our first experience with a group appearing not to want our help after having asked for it. Without a specific corporate presence in the community, we did not anticipate the potholes in the road ahead.

Initially, we considered withdrawing the grant; most corporate people would have reacted that way. After all, why put up with such grief for trying to give away a million dollars? But, we considered who would really suffer if we withdrew from the project and remained firm in support of the Comer schools.

Every business leader is aware of examples of denunciation that have sometimes accompanied corporate giving. What we could not gauge, though, was the degree to which a destructive political climate would engulf the Philip Morris grant. We now realize that the significant decline in federal dollars for various social programs, including education, has put grantees under more pressure to raise money from other sources. To expand the pool of available dollars, grantees in the pre-college educational field frequently enter into relationships with business for the first time. But in the schools and the communities they serve, there are deep questions

about why corporations are interested. The key question is: are businesses more interested in public relations or problem-solving? Doubts are exacerbated when large corporations cut their checks and run, generating complimentary media coverage while distancing themselves from the projects they support. This process reinforces an impression that the schools are being bought with tainted money, so, understandably, schools enter collaborative relationships with corporations with a caution bordering on suspicion. Sometimes this suspicion cannot be overcome.

Corporate America is also operating under a new set of pressures. Heightened international competition, productivity declines, the collapse of the financial services industry, substantially reduced real estate values, all have compounded the nation's economic difficulties and raised questions about the value of corporate leadership. In addition, corporate America is increasingly subject to criticism and/or attack from single issue constituencies, people with unforgiving ideological and political agendas. These pressures all work to make the public cynical about business in general.

Obviously, it is difficult to make productive business decisions in this environment. We want good relationships with our consumers; we know that if people trust us they are more disposed to buy our products or at least not to attack them. Although every corporation must accomplish these results first through producing superior goods, business leaders also want the respect of the consuming public for being socially responsible. Efforts to achieve this respect need not be viewed as a cynical "buying" of the American consumer. At the very least, corporate engagement is a manifestation of economic competitiveness.

There are historical factors that can help explain the relatively poor connection between business and education. Certainly, many of our public school systems have deteriorated into bureaucratic organizations with little regard for students and the education process. We in business have been very critical of these developments and very worried about the situation of schools. Corporations have also been grossly insensitive. The bottom line is that many rank and file teachers do not trust us; they feel we are condescending to them and that we exhibit a profound ignorance of their mission. Not surprisingly, many of these tensions carry elements of race and class differences.

Lastly, business and education have increasingly jousted with one another. Business has wanted schools to be more structured, more accountable, leaner, more cost-conscious, indeed, more like a business. Educators, on the other hand, have frequently criticized our lack of values and collegiality, our attention to the bottom line above all else, our formalism and lack of creativity. They have demanded that business should behave more like schools. In the end, both business and schools are guilty of stubborness and a shared assumption that we have nothing to learn from one another.

We must learn from one another. The stakes are high. The American education system was once "the great equalizer," but times have changed. Larger numbers of students are starting out with extraordinary disadvantages. The poorest of the poor are simply not in a position to succeed in schools and understand the long-term benefits of education. Students who come to school hungry, who have not had an adequate night's sleep, who are frightened or confused by events at home, are certainly not going to learn.

Philip Morris will continue its corporate commitment to equal opportunity. We will support urban school reform efforts. Our grants in Milwaukee and D.C. involve long-term commitments of our resources to communities that deserve help and to innovators in whom we believe. We are somewhat chastened, however, by our recent experience with urban schools. While we still know there are people who need our help and that business has a legitimate responsibility to get involved, we are, candidly, in a more reflective mood these days.

Once burned, twice shy. What we do from now on, we will do selectively and largely in our "hometowns," where a critical mass of our employees and their families know the local system and can benefit directly from changes in it. We also know that in making future grants we will expose ourselves to criticism. Our safeguard will be to anticipate pressures on our potential grantees. Making one million dollar grants represents our commitment over the long haul to the strengthening of public education.

An increasing overlap of the interests of business and education has given all who care a clearer window into unfamiliar worlds. Schools are not all bad, and neither are businesses. I fear that, although these two worlds have tried to adjust to rapid social changes, few have stepped back to take in the larger picture. Conferences like this one provide an opportunity for a candid exchange of views, a forum for new ideas, a place where policy makers and opinion leaders can begin to formulate the new perspectives that we need.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT PROCTER & GAMBLE IS DOING

Robert L. Wehling
Vice President
Public Affairs

The one thing everyone can rely on in considering business involvement in the education of our youth is a broad diversity of opinions. There are corporate executives who believe business should take over the public schools or start their own schools, and those who believe that business and education are fundamentally unrelated. Some school officials assert that any business involvement means an unproductive investment of time by administrators and teachers trying to deal with well-intentioned neophytes. Within the boundaries of these and other viewpoints, there are extremes of intensity on virtually every related issue.

My experience with elementary, middle, and secondary schools extends over 25 years, including ten years on boards of education. For the past four years, I have been deeply involved with the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, a consortium of business, school, social service, and city/county agencies and groups working to arrest the dropout problem in the Cincinnati inner-city schools. Our long term objective is to insure that each Cincinnati student will go on to college or into meaningful, career-ladder employment.

A business commitment to education is not an endeavor for the faint of heart. Making such a commitment productive requires conviction and experience. The corporate aim should be to contribute to education

enrichment without duplicating the efforts of others and without alienating educators, parents, and neighborhoods to a degree that is counterproductive.

Business can and must make available technical expertise, equipment, and training programs for administrators, teachers, parents, and/or students. Examples of this kind of help going on right now in several communities include providing computer hardware and software along with computer training programs for the school staff; offering training programs to schools that promise to develop a coherent concept of reform and are able to work together effectively as a team; valuing cultural, ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic diversity; giving priority to oral and written communication skills; and establishing for every segment of the school community the importance of high expectations and academic standards. Procter & Gamble has had great success with training programs for schools, and we are now utilizing them in several collaborations with educators in Cincinnati and at the state level in Ohio. One of these programs enables all administrators, staff, parents, community members, and students to participate in an ongoing process of school improvement with a focus on those interventions that have the greatest chance to succeed.

A second program is called "Investment in Excellence." It is designed to help an entire school team to get together around a common academic mission. When this program is applied in limited settings, we have seen major changes in administrator, teacher, and parent attitudes toward education on the local school level. The otherwise vague notion of a "vision" for student success can be cultivated by the intervention of a business partnership. Procter & Gamble is also a sponsor of Dr. Steven Covey's Utah project called "The 7 Basic Habits of Highly Effective People."

We tested this program last summer with the State Superintendent of Education and his key people in Columbus, Ohio, and also with a group of Cincinnati school principals. Dr. Covey's prescription of "principle centered leadership" was received favorably by virtually every school administrator. We believe this program has meaningful potential for all administrators, teachers, students, and parent groups. The essential principles of this program have been adopted by the Utah State Board of Education, with materials and standards sent down to every school in the state.

Business can and should offer as many volunteers as our schools can effectively absorb to engage in mentoring, tutoring, achievement programs, analysis of tough school issues--such as budgeting and maintenance--and a host of other problems. This is where the practical skill and training of business executives can be utilized most effectively to help school managers, teachers, and individual students. Procter & Gamble alone is supplying several hundred mentors for inner-city Cincinnati students from the fourth through twelfth grades.

In addition, business should constantly supply a stream of qualified people for local and state boards of education. Service as a school trustee is a significant opportunity to help children, and it contributes substantially to affirm corporate credibility and effectiveness in pushing for serious education reform.

Business must serve as both a support system and a prod, or even nuisance, to force school systems to focus on student outcomes and to accelerate the pace of education reform and improvement. This role involves a delicate balance, and I suspect all of us have wondered how far

business leaders should go in demanding change. Regrettably, too many school systems want to move slowly and cautiously, and they are often able to find rationalizations for the lack of dramatic improvement in student results. The action orientation and end-result demands of business can often cause friction, but I think this debate is healthy. The friction often helps both groups to accommodate a more substantial engagement with the reform agenda.

Businesses that are national and international in scope, such as Procter & Gamble, have a wonderful opportunity to use their communications networks to learn about and to disseminate information about models of education reform from other American cities and foreign countries. Business leaders are willing to do a lot more in this area of communication about school improvement, but they need a more receptive climate from administrators and government. Each school system continues to believe it is unique, and, therefore, they are occasionally unwilling to apply learning and programs from other districts.

Finally, and obviously, business can be a source of supplemental financial support for school systems and students. In Cincinnati, Procter & Gamble raised over $7 million from local businesses to support the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative. The importance of outside funding, however, is precisely its use as an extra way to establish new initiatives in the schools.

By themselves our public schools cannot redress the problems of disadvantaged, poor students. One simply cannot expect students who are abused, malnourished, homeless, working nights to support their siblings, and subject to urban pressures and calamities, to concentrate on their

studies and succeed in school. We must have a dramatically closer collaboration among our schools, community organizations, city, state, and county governments, universities, and local businesses if we are to provide all the support these youngsters and their families need on site and on demand.

Such an approach requires a massive early intervention program that starts with effective prenatal programs for all disadvantaged mothers--especially teens--and includes parenting-skill programs, nutrition, quality preschool, and "whatever it takes" to insure that every student reads well and speaks articulately by the third grade. While I know this sounds radical, I have come to believe that if children cannot read well (i.e., above national norms) by the third grade, we ought to excuse them from all other school work and put them through an intense, reading program to correct their education impairment. No one should ever be passed on to the fourth grade who cannot read and comprehend fourth grade material.

A complement to improving student performance is a radically improved program to find, attract, train, motivate, and reward outstanding principals. This is an area where universities have the potential to play a major, if not leading, role. In fact, if this recruitment alone were assured, stronger administrative leadership would have a profound impact on K-12 results.

Also, the curriculum in our schools must be more relevant and meaningful to students. In my visits to schools around the United States and in discussions with students and with dropouts, I have come to believe that our efforts to cram a prescribed curriculum in a prescribed manner down the throats of students who cannot see what the material means in their lives is a significant obstacle to learning. One reason students do not

attend school--and thousands do not show up every day, especially in our inner cities--is that schools are not an exciting place for young learners. This awareness of student focus and relevance was at the very heart of Eliot Wigginton's successful Foxfire experiment in Rabun Gap, Georgia. Some of us, too, have recently seen a vivid example of student focus at the Central Park East Secondary School in Harlem in New York. Here, in the midst of an area of high dropout rates and impossible levels of violence and substance abuse, is a school in which students are highly motivated, attend regularly, and achieve at greater-than-anticipated levels. All students in these schools are engaged in community service one morning a week, and while they do this work, teachers have sufficient time for planning and sharing. Emphasis is on mastery of skills rather than scores on multiple choice tests. Effort is made to tie student interests, such as sports or music, directly into their curriculum. Students are required to take a course in conflict resolution and are surrounded with a variety of resource and support systems.

Similar evidence that all children, regardless of race or socioeconomic circumstances, are capable of extraordinary levels of academic achievement is found in Marva Collins' school in Chicago. Here we have another confirmation of the untapped potential in millions of our young children. I saw firsthand young people from four to fourteen who had exceptional vocabularies, reading and math skills, critical thinking abilities, and genuine convictions that they had the potential to be future leaders. These values and skills are accomplished through expectations and high standards from the first day a child enters the school. There is emphasis on memorization and repetition, followed by discussion of the meaning and implications of what students are learning, and there are a lot of little

things that, individually and collectively, do make a difference. The principal is a teacher and a coach of other teachers, not just an administrator. All students must always express themselves in complete, grammatically correct sentences. My point is that it truly can be done. At places like Westside Preparatory School in Chicago or Central Park East in Harlem and in schools in Cincinnati, the evidence of successful educational experimentation is there. The anatomy of educational progress should be replicated from its model institutions.

We can reinforce this progress by creating state and local incentives to promote and reward greater collaboration at all levels and by making it advantageous for successful schools and struggling schools to work together. We can also make it rewarding for universities and public school systems to work collaboratively, and we can offer incentives to schools that invite business to provide training, to critique programs, and to streamline management.

The bottom line suggests that we can overcome education's disasters. There are signs of progress everywhere in the United States. Each of us has a responsibility to do something specific to assist the public schools. The nation's destiny will be served by nothing less than a collaboration of authentic self-interest and public-interest.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT U S WEST IS DOING

Jane J. Prancan
Executive Director
Foundation

An American carmaker brags about coming in fifth in a list of ten autos ranked by overall quality. The nine other cars are made in Japan and Germany. Korean students significantly outscore their United States counterparts on math and science tests. Korean students think they did poorly. Our students are pleased with their results. English is a second language in most industrialized nations, taught from the early grades. Not one of our 50 states requires even one foreign-language course for all high school students. In fact, thousands of students graduate from high school unable to read and write English.

These seemingly unrelated items underscore the challenge facing America, and particularly American business. The time has passed when America's economic engine drove the world's economy. A third of our nation's corporate profits come from international business. Two-thirds of American goods compete with merchandise from abroad.

Today the United States is in danger of becoming a second-rate economic power. Richard Rosecranz noted in his article "Must America Decline," Wilson Quarterly, Autumn, 1990, that "while U.S. manufacturers in 1969 produced 82 percent of the nation's television sets, 88 percent of its cars, and 90 percent of its machine tools, 20 years later they made hardly any TV's, and gave up half the domestic machine-tool market and 30 percent of the auto

market. Even in a new industry like semiconductors, this country's world market shrunk to 15 percent from 85 percent in 1980."

Technology has revolutionized what we do in our economy and how we do it. What railways and waterways were to an industrial economy, information technology is to today's economy. It changes the skills and talents needed by workers. Once it was enough for our employees to have strong backs and be willing to work. Now they must connect ideas and solve complex problems. To compete successfully in the global marketplace, our nation must successfully educate all of its young people.

At U S WEST, we believe the basic key to winning the battle for economic competitiveness is strengthening our nation's educational infrastructure. To that end, we have established a 26 million dollar educational initiative guided by three principles. First, we look at need and ask where our presence can make a real difference. Second, we look at leverage and ask how we can multiply our investment by building on existing efforts. Third, we seek involvement and look for ways to bring communities together and to personalize our commitment.

These principles guide our strategies, programs, employee activities, and funding decisions. We build coalitions to improve the education system, enhance the teaching profession, build on strengths of institutions of higher learning, expand access to information and knowledge, and promote early childhood education by training parents to be their children's first teachers.

In our major commerical territory of 14 western states reside some 89 percent of all Native Americans living on or near reservations. Nearly half live below the poverty level. Unemployment is rampant: 50 percent of

Indian males ages 20 to 60 have no jobs; on some reservations, nearly 90 percent cannot find work. Among Native Americans who attend institutions of higher learning, the dropout rate reaches 90 percent.

But there is an answer to these problems: tribal colleges. These institutions are located on reservations and are governed by boards of tribal members. By setting standards, emphasizing part-time study, and offering basic adult education and degree programs, the tribal colleges serve the particular needs of their students. They are a valuable resource for secondary schools that surround them, and they offer vital community services: family counseling, alcohol abuse programs, and job training.

After a two-year study of the colleges, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching found that "tribal colleges assume a mission of great consequence to Native Americans and to the nation." The U S WEST Foundation supports these colleges with nearly $1.5 million in grants.

We also leverage our efforts. U S WEST learned long ago that poor telephone service--missed appointments, incorrect bills, and inadequate response to customer needs--is expensive. In education, too, trying to fix things costs more than getting them right in the first place. So we have committed ten million dollars over the next three years to support early childhood education.

According to the United States House of Representatives' "Report of the Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families," August, 1985, a "one dollar investment in quality preschool education returns $4.75 because of lower costs of special education, public assistance, and crime." A 400 percent return on investment. That is leverage.

At U S WEST, we support programs that help parents help their very

young children develop language, reading, thinking, and social skills--the foundations of later learning. As Barbara Bush noted, "Home is the child's first school. The parent is the child's first teacher." We want to help these first teachers give their children the best possible start in life.

Americans have great pride in their schools. We want schools to train students, to build economic strength, and to add to the quality of life. But we cannot ask our schools to do it alone. Recently, the Rand Corporation completed a study of urban school districts. Its most important finding: "An urban school system can be turned around only if the entire community unites on its behalf." We must be involved.

In 1983, a U S WEST employee, Gary Frizzell, developed a two-hour classroom seminar on motivation, time management, academic decisions, and career consequences. The program, called "CHOICES," stresses self-discipline as the way to success. CHOICES is presented on two consecutive days to ninth and tenth grade students by volunteer employees from sponsoring companies, including U S WEST.

Students are taught that their future will depend on choices they make today. The message is not new, but it comes from a new source, a business person. Business volunteers help students understand their success in life is in their own control.

CHOICES has won acclaim from schools and from its volunteer presenters. But the most compelling recognition comes from the experience of a nineteen-year old participant in the program. Faced with myriad problems, he started using drugs and was about to leave school. One day, he was helping a CHOICES presenter from U S WEST prepare for a class--in his words, "about the time I hit bottom. I remembered the CHOICES

presentation I had been given when I was younger, and I started to think about the choices I had made up to that point. I talked with her about the CHOICES material once again and I decided to try to bring myself out of the mess I was in." After graduating from high school, the young man went on to gainful employment and college, where he maintains a 3.4 grade average.

Another excellent example of U S WEST's involvement in education is the Colorado Governor's Creativity Schools Initiative. Funds from businesses have been provided for a statewide competition in which schools are asked to demonstrate community involvement and to generate ideas to restructure and improve education. Selected schools receive a small grant, technical assistance from businesses and universities, and a waiver of state regulations necessary to meet their educational goals. The selected schools are not the only winners, though. Each applicant develops its own community plan. Most move ahead whether or not they win the competition.

One hundred years ago, the noted historian Henry Adams asked a fundamental question. What accounted for the success of the United States during its early years? At the beginning of the nineteenth century, America's population was sparse, its resources undeveloped, its economy weak. Yet within three generations, the country had grown to worldwide prominence. What propelled this young nation to maturity in so short a time? Adams' answer: America's greatest invention is its commitment to widespread, public education. What made this nation great was, above all, a population prepared by education to be actively involved in its development.

Now, as then, America has to take the lead. We must not settle for fifth place.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT PACIFIC TELESIS IS DOING

Thomas S. Donahoe
President
Foundation

In a 1990 monograph called School Restructuring, the Council for Aid to Education has made a useful distinction between the two kinds of school support activities in which corporations are currently engaged: enrichment programs and restructuring or reform programs. Enrichment programs focus on improving "the academic and social experiences of students while maintaining the traditional structure and organization of schools and school systems." Restructuring programs "are directed toward long-term, fundamental school and system changes designed to create more effective ways for students to learn and teachers to teach." The characteristic features of school restructuring programs are those that affect the whole school and are driven by the entire school staff.

Although much of the talk these days within the education and even within the corporate world is about restructuring, most of the support for schools is in the form of enrichment programs. But within both kinds of corporate activity, businesses approach school support in a number of different ways. Many corporations still tie their education support to specific business interests; for example, computer companies to the use of technology, or technology driven companies to math and science. Some companies center on the social dislocations that have their roots outside the school but are seen as frequent causes of poor student performance,

especially in urban schools. Such issues as poverty, dropouts, drug use, gangs and violence, and teenage pregnancy come within the compass of their involvement with public schools.

Another group of corporations is concerned with enrichment programs that they may think of as eventually leading to restructuring. Leadership academies for principals, parent involvement efforts, or redesigned curricula are examples. Businesses conceive of these aspects of schooling as leverage points for implementing overall improved school performance.

In promoting restructuring, corporations are supporting schools through organizations, such as the Coalition for Essential Schools, Stanford University's Accelerated School Project, the San Diego City Unified School District, and the Achievement Council's Collaboration for Educational Excellence. Some corporations have developed their own restructuring programs. At the Pacific Telesis Foundation, we have taken this route, and we have now been joined by the Wells Fargo Foundation.

I believe, however, that there is a serious problem at the present time with all these efforts--both enrichment and restructuring. The problem that concerns me is that businesses are engaged in individual efforts and consequently have generated little or no collaborative, cumulative, or synergistic force. There are curriculum programs over here; parent involvement programs over there; dropout programs scattered around; and some restructuring going on here, there, and elsewhere. The combined power of the business collaboration with schooling is diminished by its fragmentation.

If our objective is to raise the overall performance of American schools, I do not believe that a thousand points of light will get us there.

We need the heat and power generated by one sun focused on school improvement. And although I believe corporate support of enrichment programs must continue, the heat and power we need to improve overall school performance will only come through restructuring. Most business efforts must be aimed at fundamental change.

In their recent book, Politics, Markets & American Schools, John Chubb and Terry Moe summarize the organizational characteristics of effective schools that have been identified by research: "Strong leadership, clear and ambitious goals, strong academic programs, teacher professionalism, shared influence, and staff harmony." The way schools are organized is a fundamental deterrent to the ability of schools to generate these characteristics. The industrial model, the egg crate, or the cellular structure of schools (whichever metaphor one prefers) has isolated teachers inside their classrooms and severely inhibited schools from applying a collegial effort to improving student achievement. And the system itself has built up barriers against the ability of schools to change, even when they want to.

The limits to reform within the public schools are many. Here are some of the salient obstacles to educational renewal most commonly identified by business leaders:

- Schools are far too dependent on their principals. They do not have the organizational resiliency to maintain good school performance when their principals are not effective leaders.

- Although a teacher may achieve individual success in the classroom, the school itself can be failing.

- Problems that can only be addressed on a school-wide basis like attendance, dropouts, low achievement behavior, or an inadequate science program become the burden of the principal or of each teacher within his or her classroom.

- Dynamic and creative instructional methods stay contained within each teacher's classroom or grade level. There are few opportunities for teachers to connect with teachers or schools with schools. The education system is simply not very good at replication.

The intent of school restructuring is to create a school organization and a supporting system--an infrastructure--that enables teachers, administrators, and parents to duplicate the characteristics of effective schools. Changing schools into a collegial venture with a supporting infrastructure will require a fundamental, even radical, change in school organization. Like any fundamental change of an entrenched system, getting from here to there will not be easy.

In the work that the Pacific Telesis Foundation has undertaken with schools in many projects, we have identified some important factors for change:

- The focus of attention must be the whole school and its community. Specific issues such as instructional programs, parent involvement, technology, or dropouts should be addressed collegially by the school staff within the context of school needs and priorities.

- The school needs an external agent to help it through the traumas of change. The agent helps the school develop new institutional skills such as shared decision-making, team building, and leadership; but, more importantly, an external force helps the school articulate its own vision and produce the changes that make the vision come alive.

- A formal organization--a permanent but adaptive infrastructure--for planning, program development, and implementation needs to be created within the school.

- Every member of the staff, including the classified staff, and some parents should have an active role within the formal organization. Schools are small enough to function with all constituent groups directly represented in educational decision-making.

- The objectives of the organization must be explicit, measurable and focused on outcomes related to student learning. With these objectives in place and the schools held accountable for them, other institutions--the district, the state, the union--need to let go of restrictive rules, regulations, and practices.

- Just as teachers must begin to connect with teachers, schools must connect with schools both horizontally and vertically. The opportunity for schools to share plans and programs creates extremely productive interactions.

- Teachers tend to be all-powerful within the classroom but powerless outside it, except on union issues. In a restructured school, teachers as a group may want to exchange some of their classroom autonomy for the power to determine educational goals and how to achieve them.

- The project "angel," whether a corporation, foundation, university, or other educational organization must maintain its relationship with the school until the reform process and supporting structure is securely institutionalized, actively endorsed by the district and protected from change in principles.

- Once the school has sufficiently pulled itself together into a collegial organization--in some cases after the first year--the faculty should have a major voice in the selection of a new principal when the current principal moves on.

This is an interim report on what might be called the conditions for reform within a school. As Pacific Telesis Foundation continues to work with schools and to interact with and learn from others who are trying to accomplish the same thing within schools, these preliminary observations will be subject to modification. Nevertheless, based on our experience, I am convinced we now know what kind of school support is needed if our goal in this country is to raise the level of student learning across the board. I am uncertain, however, about whether business knows how to provide that support on the widest possible scale. The problem is that overwhelmingly corporations are all engaged in their own individual programs. Acting

individually, businesses cannot generate enough power to make the system itself hospitable to the characteristics of effective schools. To do that collaboration is essential.

In support for education, businesses must overcome their reluctance to collaborate with each other, their desire to put their own stamp on a project, because the leverage point for improvement is the system itself, and no independent project or collection of separate projects can generate enough weight to move it. Without collaboration our cumulative impact on education will continue to be less than the sum of our efforts. With it, I believe we have an opportunity to be a formidable agent of change.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT IS PLANNED BY CITIBANK

Paul M. Ostergard
Vice President and Director of
Corporate Contributions

If there is one thing the pace of change in the 1980's has taught us, it is that those who try to cling to business-as-usual in the 1990's will be left in the dust. That is as true for tottering ideologies and empires as it is for corporations that fail to serve customers.

How then have America's public schools--our "collective farms" as Lew Perelman at The Hudson Institute calls them--avoided the crunch? The short answer is that, when it comes to schooling, we are living in pre-revolutionary times. For the moment, the commitment of government, business, and the public is that public schools can and will be reformed.

Some educators like to say the schools did not get into a mess overnight and that it will take a decade or more to get them out of it. Others point out that it has been only seven years since "A Nation At Risk" sparked the torrent of reports that documented the sorry state of public education. Surprisingly, business people, many of whom can be demanding with respect to short term results on their own bottom lines, have shown remarkable patience with a snail's pace. This tolerance can not last. In spite of some splendid, isolated successes, the fact is "achievement levels of primary and secondary students overall differ little today from what they were 20 years ago, despite the modern global economy's demands for

increasingly skilled employees,"[1] to say nothing of democracy's fragile reliance on a thinking, engaged electorate. Business, of course, did not create education's failures, but it has decided to play a significant role in the reform effort. What began as scattered adopt-a-school relationships has now expanded into a network of well-established partnerships with as many as 70 percent of the nation's public schools. Initially, business leaders believed that real school improvement would first have to be won school by school. Schools are, after all, local bodies, and business correctly assessed that the problems of each are different. The business approach to reform avoided both heavy-handedness and "cookie cutter" fixes. Some corporate leaders also saw this approach as a logical first step because they felt they needed to demonstrate an ability to help produce results at the school level before advocating structural reforms.

Surprisingly, selected results of this bottom-up, school by school strategy have been spectacular. The GE Foundation, for example, won an award from Harvard University this year for its successes in some of the worst inner city schools in America. Its "College Bound" program, aimed at doubling numbers of college-accepted youngsters within the next five years, relies heavily on GE mentors and tutors to raise student aspirations and performance. Similarly, Citibank's "Success Fund" in the greater Miami area recognizes teacher-partners who have taken the initiative to introduce new learning techniques. Citibank is also taking school partnerships to a new level by launching research and development initiatives, such as a new

---

[1] National Assessment of Educational Progress Report, United States Department of Education, quoted in The New York Times, September 27, 1990.

alternative school for dropouts in lower Manhattan.

In these local partnerships, business and schools have learned that the value of corporate dollars is their flexibility. Business partners can move fast to fund classroom projects that teachers normally have to submit to layers of official approval or pay for out of their own pockets. Corporate grants are also underwriting larger projects that some schools have a hard time funding with public dollars, such as SAT preparation, Saturday academies, teacher recognition, and special enrichment programs. These innovations are examples of projects aimed at putting poor schools on a competitive footing with good ones.

With initial successes like these behind them, some companies, such as Citibank, have begun to push their involvement further toward wider, systemic reform. One illustration is the application of "school based management" to the public schools. This concept has special appeal for many in the business community. Our experience with corporate restructuring and downsizing in the 1980's recognizes decentralized decision making as a vital element in restoring America's manufacturing competitiveness. To us, the notion of shifting the "ownership" for decisions that impact students to the school level makes sense and is overdue. Business leaders see individual school decision making as an alternative to the large school bureaucracies that many educators believe stifle teacher creativity and limit productivity. Unfortunately, in too many cases, school-based management amounts to nothing more than buzzwords. Many teachers and principals are confused about what is expected of them. Citibank recently committed $7.2 million to 30 urban schools (ten each in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Miami), most of which were recently

designated school-based management schools, to bolster the experiment on a national basis. The grant will provide five years of strategic planning advice to help teachers and principals leverage school resources for improved student performance. These experiments will not succeed, of course, if the teachers and principals decide to embalm priorities that were once mandated top-down. Nor will they succeed if centralized school bureaucracies will not let go, or if unions fail to cooperate. (Miami is probably the model for dealing with these kinds of obstacles.) Further, we do not know if principals will share decision making with teachers. One Washington, D.C. school principal recently opted out of the experiment because he had just "retaken" the school and contends teachers are part of the problem, not the solution. Finally, one has to wonder whether the momentum behind school-based improvement can be sustained long term without a greater element of competition among schools. Improving test scores or college admission rates at isolated schools is important, but to whom will teachers and principals be accountable, and who will they try to impress with results?

Real systemic reform also means that schools should be free to consider new ways of teaching and learning. Pedagogy is important. Citibank recently granted $3 million to Ted Sizer's "Coalition of Essential Schools" to expand his work. One reason for the grant was concern that school reform might produce a trip "Back to the Future" instead of radical new ways to think about learning. Sizer's schools are experimenting with interdisciplinary teaching in larger than 30 minute blocks and with special efforts to provoke children to think and solve problems. Ted Sizer believes, among other things, that students have to be convinced to assume more

responsibility for their own learning.

Perhaps the most ambitious reforms of all, however, are being nudged top-down from outside local school districts. The President has set ambitious goals for the year 2000, and the nation's governors, as well as the CEO's of the "Business Roundtable," have joined in his program for the next century. There are also efforts aimed at adopting national standards both for teachers and for student performance. But for now, at least, how districts reach these goals is still in state and local educators' hands.

Another systemic option that is getting more and more attention is parental "choice." Politics, Markets and American Schools by John E. Chubb and Terry M. Moe has sparked renewed interest in creating a competitive environment for schooling. Paul Hill of the Rand Foundation has added fuel to the debate, citing factors that make magnet schools and inner city parochial schools more successful than zoned public schools. Each of these reform initiatives makes it uncomfortable for business-as-usual school systems.

Meanwhile, on the fringes, among the exasperated, the weary, and the frustrated one hears more and more talk of "blowing up" public school systems like so much failed public housing. Before reaching for the plunger, maybe we should put aside day-to-day frustrations with the pace of change and start to think about the future our children face. Adults talk a lot about so-called lifelong learning as a requirement for success in the future, but today's and tomorrow's children will live to find out what that means for themselves. It would be difficult, however, to find signs of system reform sentiment in most public schools. They are mostly a trip back to the early twentieth century: chalk boards, desks, and passive

instruction. Children who see or experience technology at home, on television, in hospitals, at airports or even in video game parlors must feel that adults have decided to put them in "holding tanks" for twelve years. Although it is true that more than 90 percent of schools now have computers, many are outmoded, and most are seen as frills or add-ons, unrelated to the day-to-day tasks of educating youngsters. A place called "school" must seem irrelevant to the world students see beyond the school doors.

These problems compel us to face some basic questions about education reform:

- Why have we not put our best resources to the task of reaching for the basic competencies youngsters will have to master in the year 2000 and beyond? Are they being educated to thrive in a world which we can envision with some degree of accuracy?
- Why are we not more curious to find better ways to customize learning to fit the learning profiles of individual students?
- And why have we been such laggards in investing in real educational research and development, and in the latest and best technologies that can serve as alternative and supplemental learning centers?

Some of us at Citibank have been thinking about these issues. As a worldwide financial services company that has built its competitive advantage with technology and customer attention, we have a vested interest in a well-educated and skilled workforce, as well as in customers comfortable with technology. Because we are not educators, our thinking is perhaps more business like. We think of schooling in the context of lifelong learning. For purposes of discussion, we are drafting "A Learner Strategy." It begins with a schematic that reflects the way most public school systems operate. Sadly, we see the learner as only tangentially

touched by a large city school system. We begin with a vision in an educational environment that puts the learner at its very center and treats the learner in a customer like fashion. Today, for example, we see too many students disliking school, distrustful, unknowing, and unquestioning. Tomorrow, we want students who like to learn, who feel safe, are self-assured and questioning. We believe America can replace aging, expensive, "smokestack" schools, and their one-size-fits-all structures with what the learner really needs: mass access to low cost, high quality, multimedia education when, where, and how the learner needs it. At Citibank we are trying to envision a model of the next century's schooling.

There is no reason to fear changes in the way people learn for a lifetime. We can plan and prepare for them. "In the face of rapid change, the first recourse of a nation, an institution, or an individual is the ability to learn quickly. The hard truth is we are not investing in that ability."[2] The time is now.

---

[2] ASTD Report, "Training in America."

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT IS PLANNED BY UNION CARBIDE CORPORATION

Nancy W. Deibler
Assistant Director
Public Issues

Involvement in education is not new to Union Carbide. "Long-timers" remind us about the company's role in starting the New York "Bedford Stuyvesant Street Academy," an alternative high school, in the 1960's. Corporate employees from coast to coast can readily share school board experiences, and it is not difficult to find colleagues who presented scientific demonstrations at local schools.

But today Union Carbide and other companies are looking so differently at their role in public education that it is almost like we are discussing a new subject. We are talking about being an agent for change, an advocate for restructuring the educational system and a vocal force on key policy issues.

At the same time, business is redesigning jobs in ways that utilize more of a worker's thinking capacity. Union Carbide's largest business group has a goal of 40 hours a year of continuing education and training for each employee. We are conscious of the dynamic between our society's changing needs for an educated citizenry and the institutional responses to meet this demand. For business, the topic of education is familiar, but the relationship to the issue has changed.

Why the New Role for Business in Education

Over the past few years, Union Carbide has made a deliberate attempt to more fully understand the complex issues surrounding student achievement in the United States and their relationship to the company's and country's well-being. During this process, our thinking evolved in several dimensions and led us to redefine our business role relative to education issues.

Early in our research, we became convinced that there is a need to increase student achievement across the board. We see significant negative consequences for our business, for our standard of living, and for our democracy if we do not educate more students to higher standards.

Moreover, we have developed a new understanding of what it is going to take to improve student performance. We now know that schools were never designed to educate all students at high levels of excellence. At the time our existing school model was developed, society did not require such levels of achievement. To meet today's social demands, the education system must be redesigned around the assumption that all students can learn at high levels.

At the same time, we have gained an appreciation for the impact on schools of outside societal factors. We know that redesigned schools must take into account the influence on students of poverty, lack of family support structures, and diverse cultural backgrounds.

We have also learned from looking at schools as organizations that the effectiveness of a school is closely related to how it is organized and managed. There are parallels between practices that make schools function well and principles of modern business management. Many people would be

reluctant to compare schools to companies, but institutions made up of human beings share many basic characteristics. Understanding the fundamentals of how systems work helps us see how to make them function better.

For example, it is important for organizations--businesses or schools--to have clear goals so that all activity within the system is directed toward them. Too many competing demands within an organization disperse energy and destroy the system's ability to focus on its primary objectives.

Similarly, organizations of any type function better when the people responsible for performing a certain job are also responsible for making decisions about how that job is done. Workers need to be empowered to use their minds and creativity.

Schools today are not organized around these modern organizational principles. Not only is our nation unclear about what we want schools to accomplish, but we ask that they handle every social concern that arises. Classroom teachers, the workers most responsible for creating conditions of student learning, have little discretion over the use of time or other resources. This reality is an obvious dysfunction at the center point of the educational enterprise.

In making comparisons between the way businesses and schools function as organizations, one major issue is apparent. Like businesses, schools are not able to precisely control the quality of their "raw material." No business would agree to be responsible for the quality of a finished product if it had to create the product from a resource over which it had no control. But businesses must and do develop processes that can produce quality products from a range of raw materials and human resources. Schools, also,

are asked to serve children who come to school with a wide range of physical and emotional needs as well as with varying degrees of learning readiness. From this point of view, the importance of programs that prepare disadvantaged children to enter school on an equal footing with their more prepared peers becomes apparent. And, the need for restructured educational processes that are more flexible and dynamic is also clear.

Lastly, we have recognized that all organizations resist change. Some institutions, like businesses, are forced to change because a "self-correcting" mechanism is in place--we will not exist if we do not adapt. In reflecting on schools, we realized that there is no natural mechanism for bringing about change within the system and that, because of the nature of organizations, help from without will be needed if real reform is to take place.

Traditional Union Carbide involvement in education was geared to supporting an existing system, to making a good thing better. But our recent research and experience has redefined the mission. The new understanding of the significance of the challenges facing education called for a new role, one based on the assumption that all children can learn at high levels and that a system for reaching them can be designed. Our new role is to help bring about the metamorphosis of the outmoded system and to help create the vision of what can be.

What Does the New Role Look Like

Business' new role relative to public education might be described as an agent for change. Energy and resources should be directed to activities that will bring down the barriers to change and that will help create a

restructured education system.

The biggest obstacle to change is satisfaction with the status quo. Thus, part of our role will be to help create awareness among the general public about how much better things can be. We need to help the public understand the connections among our ability to educate all students, our ability to compete economically as a nation, and the individual's personal well being. Realizing that reform will take a long time, we need to help keep the issue on the front burner. Our "awareness" efforts should be focused internally as well. Union Carbide employees are parents, community leaders, and voters, and our efforts will include a persistent attempt to bring education issues to their attention.

As difficult as it may be to do so at times, business must take positions on complex public policy issues. Taking a stand on controversial pieces of legislation and speaking out on issues are basic responsibilities of agents for change. This role includes coming to the table when funding is discussed.

To successfully carry out our new role, however, we need to prepare for it. A solid base of knowledge about education policies and issues must be created and sustained. Action decisions cannot be made in a vacuum. We will need to remind ourselves continually that we are not educators. We should not advocate a particular method of teaching or a specific text book. Our focus should be on helping to design and establish a system that will naturally seek out the "best educational practices." Such a system will motivate and reward educators who choose those methods and materials that work for them and their students.

The similarities between business restructuring and school reform

enable and obligate us to share organizational experiences. Managing innovation and change, empowering workers and redefining job responsibilities are all inherent in redesigning the education system. Business has recently acquired experience and expertise with these concepts, and much of our learning can be transferred to educators.

We must also support educators who are seeking change from within the system. By definition, this role takes vision, courage, and stamina. Business can help such individuals sustain their efforts through encouragement and reminders that change is difficult and resistance to be expected. Most of all, we can keep alive the vision of education's importance in the nation's destiny.

Finally, business needs to reexamine internal policies that influence student motivation and achievement and the ability of students to make a smooth transition from school to work. We need to intensify the dialogue between schools and companies to increase ways of supporting our mutual goals.

Challenges of the New Role

Business is not accustomed to being an agent for change, and corporate leaders are not fully comfortable in this new role. First of all, we like to be liked. Yet, inherent in helping to bring about change, is the possibility of tension between the subject of the effort and the outside force.

It will take a lot of energy to stay focused on major systemic issues and not to be distracted by attractive but unhelpful ideas. It will also be tempting to get involved in more comfortable, traditional, short term

activities designed to improve education and for which some immediate feedback may be forthcoming.

Business involvement at the policy level is not universally welcomed. Part of the problem is the way we talk. One of the words that gets in the way is "competitive." When we say, "we need educated workers if we are to remain internationally competitive," we assume the listener understands the connections among our ability to compete, the health of our economy, and the individual's quality of life. Yet, a significant number of educators and the public hear "our company wants to make more money," period. They hear "greed."

Being competitive, though, is not an end in itself. Business must be competitive in the marketplace because, as our social system is designed, this competitiveness is the way we provide the jobs people need to buy food, shelter, and clothing. Through money earned in business and through salaries, we all pay taxes that support community services and fund our system of public education. When business says, "we can't compete internationally," we are saying that the whole country is in jeopardy.

Another problem is the perception that business wants something different out of the school system than the general public does. There seems to be a sense that we want narrowly focused scientists or technicians who will serve the interests of the company above all else. Educators who hold this view worry that corporate involvement in education will skew the curriculum toward narrow business interests. In fact, a significant number of educators and the public seem to believe that if education serves the interests of business this will be contrary to serving the interest of children.

Finally, there is some resentment over business involvement at the policy level because educators are not convinced we know how to manage our own affairs in the best interest of society, let alone help another sector do its job. We have sometimes been told, "business cares about money, we care about children."

These overt and covert expressions of distrust of business motives and of our credentials need to be addressed and overcome. It will take time and dialogue among all interested to make progress in this direction. We will not fully begin to pull together, though, until we start to view society as one huge system made up of business, education, government, and family organizations, all relating one to the other.

Conclusion

As business becomes more involved in education issues, there will be times we yearn for the "good old days" of making contributions to science programs and participating in career days. But once the challenges facing our nation have been recognized and the job to be done outlined, there will be no turning back.

It will take extraordinary leadership within companies if we are to pay attention to immediate business issues on which our short term survival depends and also play a substantial role in addressing societal issues like education. There are many competing demands on employees' time and company resources. We too have a need to stay focused. If we fail to respond to today's pressures of the marketplace for economic, environmental, and safety performance, we will not be here tomorrow to help with the long term "macro" issues.

As we begin to play out the new role of business in education, the lines of difference between business and education should begin to blur. Business will continue to review its practices and policies as they impact on education and will be open to new interactive roles. As a society, we will begin to see work and learning along one life-long continuum. More dialogue and greater understanding of the relationship between business and education will lead to a better quality of life for every American.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT IS PLANNED BY NATIONAL BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

Frederick S. Edelstein
Senior Fellow, Center for Excellence
in Education
National Alliance of Business

The first question that arises in discussing corporate education endeavors is why business is involved or wants to be involved in education. Only after that question is answered can there be a discussion of what is being planned.

American corporations see the problems of today's schools as those of society. Corporate leaders realize that the future of the next generation might be forfeited easily if we ignore the current crisis in our education system. Business believes that our society must invest and reinvest in schools, teachers, and students. Business understands, as well if not better than anyone, how important human resources are to the nation's economy and what we receive in return for investments in human resources. Business is involved in education with the understanding that it is making a long-term investment in people who are essential to corporate success.

Business involvement in public education is not new. One hundred years ago, business leaders in Boston paid Horace Mann's salary because they saw and understood the importance and need for public education. Business has continued to see that importance, maybe not as much as it should have over the twenty-year period of 1960-1980, but it has continued to be involved.

Today, much of the rhetoric describing why business has become

involved in education has focused on business' experience with hiring new workers, its understanding of this nation's demographics, its requirements for remaining competitive in an international marketplace, what managers hear from fellow business leaders, and what they read. Some might call business' reasons for its involvement self-serving. However, the broadest interests of the economy and the nation, not business, have been the root of the involvement.

There is one reason for business' involvement that overshadows all other reasons, and it has not been articulated very clearly. Business is very interested in ensuring that we have a productive citizenry, one who understands what it means to work, to have public/civic responsibilities, to have a social conscience, to vote, and to care about our community and family.

Establishing goals for corporate business endeavors does not ensure educational success. Making reform work in more than random programs only highlights how intractable educational failure remains. The real question is what does business do next? What should corporations do in order to effectuate changes that will overcome the legacy of the education system's lethargy and resistance to improvements in student performance?

Many give simple answers that include granting money to offer new solutions or to implement innovative programs and practices within individual schools or school systems. Such initiatives have had only limited impact, however, since the education system neither replicates nor communicates its successes very well. Money is not the solution because it puts corporate involvement at arms length and fails to encourage business involvement within the entire range of school improvement projects.

Nor is business rich enough or big enough to change the system alone. In hard economic times financial resources may not be sufficient, suggesting that human resources and business' skills and experiences should be central features of the next effort to restructure American education.

What specific plans are now being promulgated to promote educational reform? This question can be answered from the point of view of a national business organization as well as from that of an individual corporation. Several national business organizations have begun major, long-term education initiatives that are directed at changing education policies and practices at the national, state, and local levels.

At the national level, major business groups organized the Business Coalition for Education Reform in 1989. The Coalition's agenda includes working with the nation's governors to implement national goals and with the White House and Congress to implement legislation and policies that enable and encourage the restructuring of the education system. The Coalition believes this dialogue with political leaders needs to be continued and expanded if we are to achieve the educational change necessary to an internationally competitive nation.

One of the Coalition's objectives is to work for full funding of Headstart. The Coalition has supported Federal legislative initiatives such as Congressman Peter Smith's Flexibility Act (H.R. 3347), which would enable school systems to innovate and reduce bureaucratic and regulatory barriers to restructuring. The Coalition maintains an ongoing dialogue with key Washington policy makers in order to ensure a business role in restructuring education.

At the state level, the Business Roundtable (BRT), a national

organization of 201 companies, has committed itself to a ten-year education initiative in all fifty states and the District of Columbia. One hundred and seventy-three of the 201 companies plan to be involved in this effort to support and encourage systemic change across the country. By working with governors, state legislatures, state boards, and other state leaders, the BRT companies will establish statewide coalitions that advocate systemic educational change. The plan is to get the chief executive officers (CEO) of the companies and their senior executives to work for systemic change in their cooperating state (and any other state in which they have a presence and want to be involved). John Akers, Chairman and CEO of IBM, chairs the BRT Education Task Force and leads this initiative. The Task Force is comprised of 19 CEO's.

There are different levels of involvement throughout the nation from existing statewide business organizations poised to be political advocates for change to groups struggling just to arrange a meeting of the CEO's. During the next year, the BRT Education Task Force hopes to provide technical assistance to a handful of selected states. These states have yet to be chosen, but the intent is to have a return on investment in each state. These states will also become test markets for seeing how effective a directed and organized business effort can be in facilitating fundamental educational renewal.

The aim of the BRT's long-term strategy is to change the organization, management, and provision of education in this nation. It hopes as well to alter some fundamental concepts about students and their ability to learn. This strategy is a positive approach with four basic assumptions:

- All students can learn;
- We know how to teach all students successfully;
- Curriculum content must reflect higher order skills; and
- Every child needs an advocate.

Closely tied in philosophy to the Business Roundtable's Initiative is the National Alliance of Business' Center for Excellence in Education. The Alliance has long been involved in education issues. During 1990, it decided to strengthen its recognition of and critical need for business involvement in the nation's education system by creating the Center. It assists the business community by forging the partnerships and coalitions with educators and elected officials that are needed to build a consensus for change in state and local education systems. In addition, the Center helps business leaders capitalize on their skills and experiences in assisting specific education initiatives directed toward systemic change.

The Center organizes and conducts training for senior executives involved in the BRT Initiative and for a variety of other individual corporations. These corporate involvement seminars describe issues involved in the education crisis, components of restructuring, and ways to establish internal policies and external roles for corporations. This education process is necessary to build commitment and involvement. It fosters a comfort zone for corporations since involvement in education is a culture shock for most business people.

The Center is also currently involved in helping several corporations to create their education agenda. By working with key senior executives, the Alliance aids in defining a corporate role and mission and helps set priorities and goals for a business' involvement in education. Not only do

these efforts set an agenda, they also institutionalize a corporation's commitment to education through new policies and practices. The Center has begun school-to-work transition demonstration programs in two school systems. This program requires collaborative efforts by business people and educators to change the curriculum and experiences available to non-college bound youth.

Because policy analysis is important not only to understand the issues of systemic change but also to assist business' political advocacy role, the Center is conducting a thorough analysis of existing state policies, practices, and statutes used for education reform in conjunction with the National Governors Association and the Education Commission of the States. The intent is to analyze the best of the reform legislation; to build a resource of model reform policies, practices, and statutes; and to make this resource available to business leaders and coalitions.

In these programs and others, national business groups are trying to work on the cutting edge of educational change. Their efforts are intended to "push the outer edge of the envelope" and to be a political advocate for systemic change. Business' recent and future endeavors will address ongoing efforts for educational improvement at the local and state level by providing technical assistance, financial aid, and human support. Its current efforts include advocacy at all levels and a commitment to make systemic change a reality because education must change if our nation is to remain internationally competitive.

Business leaders know their aspirations for a democratic America will never rise higher than the educational competence of all our citizens. The quality of public schools is the essential component in the nation's

ultimate success in a new century. Every plan for future business involvement in education is based on these principles.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT WILL ENSURE EDUCATION REFORM
A TEACHER/UNION LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

Albert Shanker
President
American Federation of Teachers

The last decade of a century is usually a time of retrospection and celebration. But the mood of the United States today is hardly upbeat. There is a general pessimism, so uncharacteristic of the American temperament, that is nowhere more pessimistic than in appraisals of our public schools. The acute observer sees little that is happening in terms of real improvements in student performance. The few instances of change that make a difference do not go further than those singular institutions struggling to make reform work. Most reforms are actively resisted, not replicated. The alarms announced seven years ago in A Nation at Risk are still heard in this land; its agenda for change is largely unfulfilled. My hope is that pessimism does not lead to despair.

Several years ago, I watched with anticipation to see what Richard Green would accomplish as the newly appointed chancellor in New York City. His untimely death did not permit this gifted and sensitive educational leader a full opportunity to make reform more than rhetoric in the nation's largest school district. Chancellor Green's short tenure indicated why educational change is so slow to advance. Making leadership work is a major problem. One of his proposals almost served as a model of why the reform movement is unable to generate demonstrable gains in student learning. The chancellor, considering a package of changes in the earliest

grade levels, immersed himself in the development, evaluation, and promulgation of a new test to determine advancement from kindergarten into the higher grades. My silent reaction to this extended and personal commitment by what might be the nation's most important school administrator was to ask a question: In what other business organization would a chief executive officer deal with such an item--admittedly important--with such devotion as to ignore the larger policy issues then awaiting resolution in New York City? Even more importantly, could a multi-billion dollar enterprise like the New York City public schools be successful if its principal administrators were so much immersed in particular decisions relating to the educational program? These questions are not meant simply to endorse the cliché that schools should be run like businesses. My point is the failure of most school administrators to consider the reality that educational improvement requires a long-term strategy and dramatic changes in the entire structure of the public schools.

Some months ago, I participated in a Business Roundtable Conference composed of 175 CEO's from all regions of the country. Despite the focus on reform, the fragmentation of the very substance of reform left a decidedly negative impression on most of the corporate participants. Just as particularity is an impediment to systemic reform, complexity suggests to business people that educational problems are impervious to improvement. Business executives are outsiders with regard to American schooling. One hundred and seventy-five corporate leaders were willing to endorse a strategy for reform; few needed to be informed of all the problems and scattered manifestations of experimentation everywhere in the nation. What they should have considered were those limited number of strategies that

can make a difference.

The engagement of business in educational issues does not require an insider's intense involvement with every academic and professional item on the reform agenda. The corporate executive who wants to remodel a business does not rely on a program that will make a difference slowly or one that requires extended attention to every detail of change. Nor would a CEO be satisfied with the appearance of business reorganization that is nothing more than a public relations gambit. The business leader wants to know what are a corporation's major goals, what are its successes and limitations, how managers at all levels are performing, what rewards are available for success, how achievement is measured, in what specific ways the whole process is coordinated, and how top managers are held accountable. The so-called "bottom line" in the business world is the objective measure of profit and the long-term health of a company.

The public schools are deeply troubled, even if their main supporters still do not accept the threat of their very survival. Reform is essential. Drastic change is inevitable. In the next century, the urban schools will be very different from current institutions, even if we are yet unable to conceive of their future structures. The questions remain: What can be done that will make a difference in the schools? How can we speed up the process of restructuring to insure the evolution of new urban school models? My belief is that the same incentives that corporations utilize to reorganize their operations are vital models for educational reform. The concept of incentives also has the promise of simplicity in creating a new reform agenda.

Among the first incentives to be considered are those that affect

students. Most nations have students working hard in their equivalent lower schools because students want to advance into college. The reality of severe limitations on enrollment into postsecondary institutions elsewhere is one of the most striking contrasts between the United States and virtually the rest of the world. Is it too much to suggest that as long as students are not required to perform at their highest rate of academic potential, there is a disincentive to achievement in the lower schools? Why work hard if college admission--except perhaps for a small segment of the most demanding private and public universities--is still probable for students whose academic achievement falls below their potential? It is also possible to establish incentives for better student achievement by tying grants and scholarships more closely to high school achievement. One way to revive the academic culture of urban public schools is to send a message to students that their academic success will be rewarded immediately after graduation.

The same message is critical for non-college-bound students. Most businesses are indifferent to how well prospective employees, who are recent high school graduates, performed in high school. A student who barely passed or almost never showed up is given practically the same consideration for hiring, job placement, and starting salary as one who worked hard and had a good attendance record. American corporations have an obligation to make high school performance more important in hiring and placing entry-level workers. Perhaps government programs can assist by establishing incentives for job creation based on academic performance at the high school level. We must remind every student that academic success is ultimately a foundation for a better life.

Incentives are also needed for the adults who work in America's public schools. The idea of incentives has been around for some time in public education. Typically, it has come to us in the form of individual merit pay, which has been resisted on the grounds of subjectivity, unfairness, and negative effects of pitting teachers against one another. These are all legitimate complaints. The idea of incentives is nonetheless sound. We should find ways of rewarding whole schools on the basis of improved student performance and thus use incentives as a way of encouraging innovation and risk taking and teamwork. How incentives might work in public education is not at all clear; it will require thought and experimentation. But it is clear that we already have an incentive system in our schools, one that discourages new ideas and practices, risk taking, and collegiality. And this system does not work.

The answers to our educational problems cannot be hierarchically and bureaucratically imposed. For one, schools are very different. The problems facing urban schools are different from those in suburban schools, and there is even great variation within districts. Second, even if a solution imposed from above were to work today, it probably would not tomorrow. What we need is to build into our schools the capacity to respond to problems as they arise, to adjust and to change practices, not on the basis of the latest fad or panacea but on the basis of the best available wisdom about teaching and learning. Incentives can help develop this capacity for self-renewal in our schools.

Without self-renewal there will be crushing challenges to the public schools by the end of this decade. Their very survival is at stake. The threats that come from vouchers and other schemes to privatize education

represent dissatisfaction with public school failure. Every stimulus to change must be considered to overcome the resistance to change inherent in the public school bureaucracy. The next century demands nothing less than a transforming educational renewal.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT WILL ENSURE EDUCATION REFORM
A SUPERINTENDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

Peter McWalters
Superintendent
Rochester City School District

The City School District of Rochester, New York, has received national attention during the past three years for its efforts to reform public education. Our goals, stated when we embarked on the road of reform, are to make ours a district marked by strong achievement that is not predictable by a student's circumstances or background. Put simply, we have committed ourselves to the belief that all children can learn and to the conviction that schools have the capacity and the responsibility to educate all students well.

We conducted an assessment of the District when we began and discovered that, when measured against those goals, the District needed to resolve problems persistent in schools for many years--problems characteristic of the nation's urban school systems that were most evident in high records of student loss and dropout, in poor skills among many who graduated, and in an unacceptable extent of failure among the urban poor. We also acknowledged that we would never alter the profiles of poor achievement if we were content to carry on the business of education as usual, even if we followed familiar routines with greater intensity. We recognized that realizing the goal of strong achievement for all students would require fundamental, far-reaching change in the beliefs and practices that characterize the work of schools.

On the surface, Rochester might seem an unlikely setting for school reform. It is a city of fewer than 300,000 residents, part of a county that is home to a million people and that boasts one of the richest per capita incomes in the country. Rochester has a longstanding reputation as an industrial center, a heritage that dates to the early years of the nineteenth century when the city was a central point on an important commercial route along the Erie Canal. The area has long been known as the home of strong corporations, such as Eastman Kodak Company, Xerox Corporation, and Bausch & Lomb Optical. It is a high-tech, business community that enjoys the benefit of excellent higher education institutions, museums, and cultural centers.

Rochester has also traditionally enjoyed the benefit of fine public schools, schools organized like others across the country: essentially designed to serve a middle class given impetus by its own support systems of ethnic group, religion, and family. Public schools, as an institution, have traditionally set the rules and the children of the middle class have passed through the grades if they abided by the institution's rules. Until recently, those who did not abide by the rules and left before graduation still had a chance for a comfortable future in an economy where jobs in skilled trades and in industry did not necessarily require a high school diploma.

That picture is vastly different today, altered dramatically by an economy that places more stringent demands on the young people who are students and who will be our nation's employees and citizens in the future. That picture--the reality of a new economy--provides the context for our decision to undertake school reform in Rochester. We have come to see

that, if we are to understand the significance of the change required for public schools, we must first understand the demands that changes in the economy place on our graduates. The case for redesign of public schools draws its urgency from the requirements of the future, as expressed in the expectations that American society now holds for a productive workforce and an educated citizenry.

In the past, it was sufficient for a high school graduate who sought employment to present a basic academic profile. In an economy based on mass production, employers looked for graduates who had shown regular attendance, were able to follow simple directions and work independently at repetitious tasks, and possessed average reading, writing, and computational skills. In Rochester, for example, industrial productivity between 1960 and 1985 was dependent on an expanding workforce, not a highly skilled one. Jobs were available in both the manufacturing and non-manufacturing sectors for residents moving into the area, baby boomers entering the workforce, and women who needed or elected to work outside the home. Now, however, workforce growth is declining dramatically and, because of the need for American business to compete internationally, the pressure to change the workforce will intensify.

Today, changes in technology and methods of production dictate different skills for American workers. Employers tell us, increasingly and insistently, that they are looking for employees with broad knowledge who are open to new ideas; able to learn continually and to apply their skills in new situations; able to read, compute, and communicate; able to solve problems working independently or with others on a team; responsible, adaptable, and comfortable with change. Few jobs that carry career

mobility in any area of the economy--such as manufacturing, sales, service, management, or the professions--will be filled by workers with minimal literacy, a passing ability to compute, or marginal communication skills between now and the year 2000. Rather, the vast majority of new jobs will require that workers enter with solid reading and writing skills; a sound grasp of math, science and technologies; an ability to diagnose and unravel problems; a capacity to interact well and communicate with others; and the flexibility to shift to new responsibilities as the work demands. These are not skills traditionally expected in the majority of jobs and, of critical importance for public education, competencies not traditionally met by all high school graduates.

Complicating the task of the future for schools are demographic statistics that indicate that a growing proportion of the new workforce will be drawn from groups not well served in public schools. As the proportions of the nation's children who are Black and Hispanic increase, schools continue to record disproportionately high rates of failure for students in both groups. As the percentage of the poor who are children rises--now accounting for almost half of all Americans who live in poverty--schools struggle to compensate for the disadvantages that often accompany life in poverty, such as inadequate nourishment, housing, care, and attention. Thus, as economic considerations dictate greater sophistication in the skills of high school graduates, schools face the challenge of serving with greater success students for whom the school's structures and practices have been most ineffective.

Educators cannot ignore the implications of these economic and demographic projections. They carry a new imperative for public schools.

American society asks schools to realize the promise of education for all students: preparation for a productive life in society, equipped with knowledge of the world and with the skills required to reason, communicate, and act. Until now, that promise could remain an ideal because, in practical terms, society did not depend on schools to fulfill it. The economy held opportunities, though limited, for the unskilled and poorly skilled, chances for even those without a high school diploma to find work and earn a comfortable living. Now economists tell us the country's vitality depends upon an educated citizenry that includes all children, even those whom the schools have previously not educated well.

In Rochester, we understand this argument but recognize the need for change from a slightly different perspective. The current economic and demographic analysis lends force to the mission we have set for ourselves. We have said that we will educate all students, not simply for the sake of the economy, but also because we believe all children have worth. We have said that we will not sort students into patterns of achievement and failure according to predictors, such as background and socioeconomic class, not only because the economy requires more sophisticated workers, but also because we recognize the debilitating consequences that poor preparation for a productive role in society has for the individual. Our sense of the worth of students determines our goals and the values we bring to them. Economic considerations reinforce the importance of the goals we have set.

Acknowledging the need for change, the fact that schools cannot expect to meet the requirements of the future working within an organization that has altered few of its practices in the past 100 years, the Rochester Board

of Education has committed the District to these strategies to achieve reform: 1) set high and explicit standards that reflect all that our children should know and be able to do; 2) establish tests and instruments of assessment that truly inform students, parents, teachers, and the public as to students' level of mastery; 3) find and retain the best professionals to work with the children in our schools; 4) decentralize the organization, placing the capacity for response in the hands of school staff; 5) provide a comprehensive system of professional development to support teachers and school personnel; 6) provide incentives and disincentives to schools and school personnel, encouraging each school's staff to do whatever needs to be done to reach performance targets. When these aspects of change are in place, the District will be organized and will carry out its work in a manner strikingly different from that normally associated with public school systems.

Last spring, we took the first steps in setting new performance standards for Rochester students. We discovered something quite interesting, but also unsettling in that process. In collaboration with the National Center on Education and the Economy, the Board engaged the local community--parents, students, teachers, employers, industrial leaders, government officials, representatives of higher education--in discussion of expectations for students: What should graduates of the Rochester schools know and be able to do? What skills do they need to advance to college and to gain responsible employment?

The picture that emerged from interviews, surveys, community forums, and research is one of a community in which aspirations are high but actual expectations are low. Both colleges and employers emphasized personal

qualities including motivation, work ethic, and self-confidence and assigned academic skills a low ranking on their lists of important attributes; they believed applicants for admission or employment would not be able to meet higher standards. Parents, students, and educators conceded that low standards characterize the school system, but expressed little confidence in the system's ability to alter the situation. As the National Center's report to the Rochester Board concluded: "While everyone voices high aspirations, the whole system conspires to embrace very low real standards in practice. This study makes it quite clear that the schools by themselves can do very little to raise the real standards; bringing the standards that determine people's behavior into line with the community's aspirations will require concerted action by every major segment of the community."

Among those to whom we look for support are leaders of the local business community, who recognize their stake in the quality of public schools and have accepted a share of responsibility in restructuring education. The participation of business in the Rochester initiative occurs primarily in three ways: 1) involvement of the top echelon of corporate leaders in connecting education with economic development, and in advancing the urgency of education reform; 2) consulting relationships in which "loaned executives" help the District organize and carry out programs for significant periods of time; 3) corporate and business partnerships with individual schools and classrooms. Put into practice, this participation has taken many forms, from corporate involvement in lobbying for state education aid to a million-dollar marketing campaign designed to encourage young people to stay in school to an array of school-business

partnerships in mentoring, tutoring, and curriculum development.

Perhaps most powerful in its potential effect is the type of involvement embraced by Wegmans, a Rochester food chain recognized nationally for excellence in product and service. Wegmans has initiated a partnership called the "Work-Scholarship Connection" in which school personnel and Wegmans personnel join their energies to help young people succeed in school. The program identifies at-risk students in the early secondary grades--students whose record of attendance, achievement, and behavior suggests that they are unlikely to stay in school or to graduate. Wegmans gives each a part-time job, assigns a department manager to serve as mentor, and assigns another employee who is a college student to provide peer support and tutoring. A District employee, often a guidance counselor, acts as an in-school mentor. Overseeing the whole system is a Wegmans loaned executive, a facilitator who follows the progress of each student as a concerned parent would.

Four years after it began, the Wegmans program has a graduation rate of better than 50 percent among its participants, an impressive statistic for a group originally anticipated to drop out. Not only did these students graduate; but Wegmans gave each one a college scholarship, an additional incentive to continue on the road to achievement and productivity. That these young people--at risk of failure, often from broken homes, troubled by drug abuse or teen pregnancy--succeeded is not to be credited exclusively to the Rochester school system. Rather, their success is due to an aggressive, supportive relationship initiated and owned by a Rochester business.

Examples like the Wegmans Work-Scholarship Connection point out the

power inherent in building a strong school-to-work transition, an element of education reform as critically important as staffing classrooms with the best teachers or designing an organization that can foster improvement at individual schools. Once we develop high standards, standards appropriate to the requirements of a new economy, we need to aspire to them, convinced that every child in our schools can attain them. Achieving that aim will require a coalition of education, government, and business that has never before been forged in this country. The potential rewards are enormous and will be measured in the competitive skills of the future workforce.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT WILL ENSURE EDUCATION REFORM AN EXECUTIVE'S PERSPECTIVE

Anne S. Alexander
Vice President, Education Programs
At&T Foundation

The Civil War series on PBS this fall reminds us that, while often we have overcome major divisions, we may still have not resolved them. Today, the education crisis represents no less a struggle about who we are as a nation than did the Civil War or the Civil Rights movement. Yet despite the alarms raised in countless national reports, our response is not the psychological equivalent of a call to battle.

Do we want a truly democratic society where diversity is valued? Where each individual is valued? Where each child, no matter what the surrounding circumstances, is valued as indispensable to the success of our country both spiritually and economically? Do we really want our national identity to be identified with educational equality, opportunity, and success?

Fundamentally, Americans have failed to answer these questions. On the stage of education reform, all of us, including the business community, must face up to them.

The quality improvement process that so many industrial organizations are going through comes down to one essential strategy: valuing the human being. The most successful industrial transformations recognize each employee as a person who not only contributes to producing goods and services, but also actively and critically improves the process in response

to changes in the business environment. Progressive corporations nurture each employee as a lifelong learner. For these corportions, productivity becomes quality: doing it right the first time depends on the commitment of each individual contributor to a product's design and quality and ultimately respects the customers who pay for America's goods and services.

What does it mean to "do it right" for schools? How does this conception of reform apply to students and teachers? How do we move from conditions of isolation, ignorance, inertia, and undervaluing school personnel to a condition of interaction, innovation, and integration?

The key notion is the personal interaction of those responsible for education. The school must be a place where ideas are exchanged by professionals who are valued by society; successful schools are institutions in which educators and students share in the excitement of learning. Although business will continue to nurture reform efforts and model projects, we must foster human exchange much more aggressively--bringing teachers and counselors into our work environment not just for a day's tour but for summer work and year-long sabbaticals. We must provide opportunities for teachers to see first hand what the environment of business and industry is today. In particular, they need to see dramatically the pace of change that our employees have to deal with in the workplace--the same pace of change that their students must be equipped to deal with when businesses hire them.

We also should encourage business personnel to spend more time in schools to understand that environment better. More importantly, we must more actively encourage people to léave industry and enter teaching. Industry has long had a freeflow of exchange with higher education. A

similar exchange is necessary with elementary and secondary education. Although an alternative certification track will never be the dominant source for teaching personnel, the already unacceptable shortages of math and science teachers means we will have to rely on a continuous stream of supplementary teachers from business and industry.

Innovation is a vital component of education reform. The school must be a place that fosters the intellectual growth of professionals and the development of critical thinking skills by students. Innovation does not mean "doing reform" once. Innovation is not change for the sake of the "new." Rather it becomes a habit of mind. It is thinking that is creative, energizing, and adds value to the learning process year to year. Initially, though, we must put in place a framework with both standards that raise expectations for every child and governance structures that assure accountability. Sadly, we have made only piecemeal progress on either front.

Education reform requires integration, not fragmentation. One approach is a holistic concept in which the education of children is related to the whole society. To foster this thrust, business must join the advocates for children in the halls of state legislatures and Congress. We have been remiss in this effort to date. We have concentrated on public policy and regulation that impacts our industries in the short term. With all our support of education, we have not concentrated enough on the public policies that will affect our human resource base for the long term. Head Start and early childhood programs must be our concern as well as tax and trade legislation.

Integration also means insisting that schools function in and with the community. We can no longer let the walls around the building we call

"school" separate what goes on inside them from health services, family and parent counseling, and other services that must be available for children to succeed. This requires a major shift in the mind-set of school personnel, municipal, state and federal civil servants, and taxpayers whose dollars flow through numerous public agencies in a fragmented way.

When we look at the frustratingly slow pace of implementation of educational change, it is hard not to contrast it to the pace of change in world events that we have just witnessed. Without communications technology, for example, the walls across Europe would have remained high for a lot longer. What we have learned is that at a certain point when people have access to other people and ideas, they will free themselves. There is no stopping the technological forces that are helping to make the world a true global village.

Remarkably, comparable changes in communication in the education environment simply have not occurred. Teachers, in most instances, remain isolated as professionals. Generally speaking, they do not have offices or easy access to the basic communications tools that any other working professional in America takes for granted--telephones and computers that connect them to each other or the world outside the building. Little wonder that they are not connected to the social service worker right down the street who may be serving the same child.

Finally, educational integration mandates that what works in curriculum must be tied to what works in continuing professional development and active learning, and to what works in management--all at the same time and all in support of a coherent vision and plan.

The kinds of interaction, innovation, and integration that I have

described cannot happen without valuing each person, without having a clear national vision, without having specific national goals and standards, and without having local strategies to reach those common goals. Ultimately, we will not do the reform job without accountability in the governance and management structures of schooling. And those structures must support a vision of high expectations of achievement for every child and every school--a vision embraced by American society as a whole.

AT&T in planning future programs related to school reform is aiming to reach those that are closest to children--namely parents and teachers. We will attempt to direct our support to programs that build the capacity of school professionals and parents in inner cities where we have a major presence.

In sum, when we ask what will ensure education reform, the answer is nothing short of a new way of thinking. The habit of waste that pervades our society in every enterprise must be eradicated from education. We should place a more general value on our human resource base and, in particular, on children and the future corps of talented people--teachers, counselors, principals--who will serve in schools. To enlist such a corps, we must reform the process of preparation for school professionals and integrate that process completely with the needs of children and communities in and around the schools. This implies significant new responsibilities on the part of higher education that have gone largely unaddressed until recently.

As skeptical as many are about the President's and governors' six education goals, we must not underestimate the significance of the fact that they actually came together to make the first steps towards a national

vision of what education must be. When one compares the low standing of the United States with every other industrialized nation in terms of school performance, simple common sense suggests that we must have an educational vision supported by coherent national standards. How each school or district gets to those standards remains in the hands of local management and leadership. Our nation has hard work yet to do on defining that vision and on the specific steps and measurements to reach it. But it is significant that for the first time in our history at the President's meeting in Charlottesville, Virginia, we moved from the gospel of local control in education and freed our thinking to consider national goals. The challenge remains for the President to lead the process of public commitment to a common purpose and for local leaders, citizens, and educators to deliver it.

If we can reach high goals, in spite of our many divisions, in the process we will build schools that share the characteristics of clarity of purpose, interaction with society, innovation as a modus operandi, and integration of services for the whole child. In that same process, we should also reach a new national identity--one that believes that diversity is our strength and one that esteems every child.

CORPORATE EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS: WHAT WILL ENSURE EDUCATION REFORM
A LEGISLATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

Gary K. Hart
Chairman, Senate Education Committee
California Legislature

Educational reforms in the 1980's have led to higher test scores and more students taking tough classes, but the system has failed a large number of students--particularly minorities and the poor--who drop out or graduate without basic skills. Many students who complete their public school education are not prepared to become active members of a democratic society, to enter the workforce, or to continue their education.

The student population is changing. In California, for example, more than one in every five children is reared in poverty, with accompanying educational deprivations, and that number is increasing. Approximately 14.5 percent of California students had limited proficiency in English in 1988. Los Angeles County alone accounted for 45 percent of this statewide total.[1]

Societal needs are changing, yet schools have not kept pace with these tremendous changes. Many of our schools continue to be organized for an agrarian, pre-technological economy. In order to ensure education reform, corporate America will need to work closely with educators and parents to rethink fundamental issues in schooling: how schools are organized; who makes education decisions; how learning occurs; what the respective roles are of teachers, students, parents, and administrators.

---

[1] "The Condition of California Schools, 1990," Policy Analysis in California Education, (P.A.C.E.), University of California at Berkeley, CA, 1990.

Business Is Concerned

Today's jobs are more demanding. Increasingly, companies are looking for workers with communication and reasoning skills, problem-solving abilities, and the ability to work on a team. However, companies and industries are having difficulty getting enough qualified entry-level employees to keep competitive.

In a recent survey of California's largest corporation, 63 percent of the largest firms in California report that new applicants for entry-level positions lack a satisfactory educational background. Fifty percent state that the ability level of job applicants is one of the ten most critical issues facing their companies today.[2]

Last year, corporate America spent $210 billion to upgrade workers' skills. This spending is projected to increase to $300 billion by 1995. A Cornell University study concluded that the cost to the United States in lost output reached $86 billion in 1987, an amount that would double in real terms by the year 2000. Every dollar spent to upgrade workers' skills is a dollar that cannot be spent on the other costs of doing business, including research and development to maintain America's productivity.[3]

Typical Business Approach To Date

Acting on their concerns, many corporations have committed time and resources to improving education. Some businesses have helped to promote

---

[2] Source: California Business Roundtable document prepared by Deborah Purcell, 1990.

[3] Ibid.

"Blue Ribbon Commissions" to study education; others have promoted "Adopt-a-School" programs; still others have made donations of computer hardware to schools. Although helpful to a degree, these approaches do not contribute to fundamental changes in the ways schools are organized for teaching and learning.

New Approaches Needed

New approaches are needed to help measurably improve student performance and assure a quality education for all children. At the same time, new approaches are needed in the relationship between businesses and schools. We need business to help advocate for children, schools, and reform. Despite the progress made in the 1980's, the agenda for education remains largely unfinished. In order to attend to a new agenda, business must join with others to become strong advocates for revitalizing public schools. An agenda for revitalizing education in the 1990's would include at least six elements:

First, early intervention for students and their families, including in particular, prenatal care, and preschool for children from poor families. The data on early intervention is well-documented and dramatic: One dollar spent on prenatal care for pregnant women can save more than $3 on medical care during an infant's first year and $10 down the line. During the first year of life, a child's brain grows to two-thirds its final size. If a baby does not have good food during this period, he or she will need intensive educational services in school, and even the most intensive

interventions probably may not repair all of the damage.[4]

A national survey in 1988 found that two-thirds of teachers reported "poor health" among children to be a learning problem. This is why Head Start, the model federal program providing quality preschool for poor children also includes annual medical screenings. Ken Nelson, my conference colleague from Minnesota, can tell you about his state's pioneering Children's Health Plan, created to provide primary preventive care for children in his state.[5]

The impact of early interventions has shown sustained, long-term effects. In the widely-published evaluation of the Perry Preschool Project, the results of preschool education for poor children were striking. At the age of nineteen, twice as many program participants as control children were employed, attending college, or receiving further training. Their high school graduation rate was one-third higher, their arrest rates 40 percent lower, and their teen pregnancy rates 42 percent lower.[6]

The second item involves deregulation of schooling. Local schools are often forced to wade through a maze of bureaucratic requirements, and as a result, fundamental changes in teaching are discouraged. Too much school district energy is spent on dictates and communication, and too little is devoted to support and management. Instead, the role of school districts

---

[4] Source: Time Magazine, "Do We Care About Our Kids?", October 8, 1990.

[5] The plan, which was created two years ago, costs the state about $180 per child; parents pay $25. Source: Time Magazine, "Do We Care About Our Kids?", October 8, 1990.

[6] Schorr, Lisbeth B. and Daniel, Within Our Reach: the Cycle of Disadvantage, Anchor Press, New York, 1988, page 195.

should be to assure that local schools have autonomy and flexibility, as well as sufficient time, material resources, technical support, and staff development to do the job. Principals and teachers should have broader authority to provide education programs attuned to meet clearly stated statewide education goals. Schools should be held accountable for results in meeting these goals, not for complying with rules and regulations.

A third initiative is to promote professionalism in teaching. Until we create environments that allow teachers to take risks and to become invested in the important decisions of schooling, we will continue to recruit teachers from among the lower half of college graduating classes and to lose many of our best teachers in their first few years in the classroom. We must take the steps necessary to insure that teaching becomes an honored, well-paid profession where teaching professionals have substantial say over how schools meet educational goals.

The fourth item is support for reforms in instruction and assessment. The fundamental process of schooling is interaction among teachers and students. We need to develop instructional strategies that engage students actively in learning, where students spend less time passively listening and more time writing, conducting their own experiments and investigations, analyzing their own work, and working with other students. In addition, we should eliminate a lot of unnecessary student testing and develop performance assessments that teach as well as test.

Fifth is greater use of technology to support student learning. To date, the power of technology to support student learning in public schools has gone largely untapped. According to the federal Office of Technology Assessment, in 1985 there was only $1,000 of capital behind each worker in

K-12 education, a figure well below the average of $5,000 per employee in the general economy and the $7,000 to $20,000 for employees in a labor intensive industry. Many teachers, though, continue to use computers for simulations and to connect with data sources, opening classrooms to infinite new learning opportunities.

The sixth and final item involves bridges to the world of work. Unlike their counterparts in other developed countries, students in American high schools have little incentive to do well in their studies, particularly if they do not plan to enroll in college. This must be turned around so that performance in high school counts in the job market. Businesses could evaluate student transcripts as part of their hiring process, or schools could award students "certificates of mastery" based upon a clear set of goals developed by educators, parents, and community representatives.

Business Wins One in California

In California, the Business Roundtable has begun to take a comprehensive approach to educational renewal, and this year they won big when their education restructuring measure, Senate Bill 1274, was signed into law in September.

Under SB 1274, which I authored in conjunction with legislators from both houses and parties, planning grants are available to school districts for individual schools committed to making substantial changes in their school's organization and structure over a five-year period. The goal of school restructuring is to give teachers more opportunities to work in direct and personal ways with students, and to offer students a rigorous,

activity-based curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking and problem-solving. Our intent is that restructured schools will have unique opportunities for change:

1. Teachers will work collaboratively to develop a challenging, coordinated learning program, and students will spend more time in active learning.

2. Alternative education opportunities will be expanded, allowing 11th and 12th grade students to enroll in specialized secondary school programs or college courses, and participate in internships with business, industry, schools, and community organizations.

3. Roles and responsibilities of parents and school staff will be redesigned to allow more decisions at the school site level.

4. Technology will be used to support student learning.

5. Preschool programs for poor four-year-olds will be expanded and schools will coordinate with other agencies in providing comprehensive services to children and families.

The Roundtable is intent on making the promise of SB 1274 a reality by working with local schools and school districts to help build grassroots coalitions among educators, civic groups, parent associations, minority organizations, and the business community.

Other Strategies Based Upon An Integrated Approach to Schools

A number of Roundtable corporations are directly involved in other community-based partnerships to sponsor school improvement programs. For example, Pacific Telesis has provided multi-year restructuring grants to six schools that have made a commitment to major, structural changes.

Other strategies that business should consider in promoting essential school renewal include:

1. Encouraging corporate managers to serve on local school boards, and giving them time off to do so.

2. Providing specific feedback to schools on the performance of their graduates and reserving entry level positions for high school graduates who meet mutually agreed upon criteria.

3. Funding grants for teachers to engage in in-depth study in their subject matter area or in developing curricula or staff training consistent with schoolwide improvement goals.

4. Encouraging employees to volunteer in schools to teach a course, assist a teacher, or tutor and guide a student.

5. Offering to assist schools to make greater use of technology to support student learning.

Conclusions

Over the past decade much has been don to strengthen schooling, with some promising results. We have a long way to go, however, if we want to ensure that all children have access to challenging learning programs.

Can American corporations help to revitalize American education? There is no doubt in my mind that the involvement of business and industry in education is not only desirable but essential. The task of bringing about fundamental change in schools is too great for schools to go it alone. Nor should they go it alone, because this enterprise affects all of us. Not only is our economic competitiveness on the line, the civic health of our country is at stake. If we cannot overcome the current trend toward two societies, one poor and one comfortable, one educated and the other illiterate, we will lose not only our competitiveness, but our civility and our national community.

Just as schools are rethinking fundamental issues of school organization, governance, curriculum and instruction, corporations must rethink their relationship to schools and to education reform. We need

corporations to become advocates for children, for families, for schools, and for the type of education restructuring that will lead to fundamental improvements in teaching and learning for all students. There are few endeavors that are as worthy of our time and attention as education renewal.

AN AFTERWORD

Eugene R. Wilson
President
ARCO Foundation, Inc.

George Bernard Shaw once observed that America would be the first country in history to go directly from barbarism to decadence--completely bypassing civilization. His statement may offend American sensibilities and damage our pride, but in view of the insidious decline of the quality of urban public schools over the past three decades, he may have been more of a visionary than we are willing to admit.

Fortunately, the great American institution of business finally is recognizing how America is changing and how another great American institution, public education, also needs to change. Business involvement in public school reform was born out of alarm. Business is now being asked to make school reform a top priority. A few corporate leaders are getting involved simply because it is the right thing to do. Others are now realizing their own interest in committing executive leadership to the effort.

As the conference papers demonstrate, business has discovered isolated instances of glowing success in improving the quality of urban public education and supporting social services for some of America's "hardest-to-teach" children. A vision of what might be and, in fact, of what must be, has emerged. Armed with this new vision, business will demand that public education change itself or be changed from without to insure success for

the increasingly diverse, multicultural population that will constitute a majority of our urban centers for generations far into the future.

Business also is beginning to recognize that the issues of urban public schools are intertwined with complex urban social issues. The two sets of issues must be addressed simultaneously if real positive change is to be achieved. The implication of these issues to public policy makers and to deliverers of social services in communities everywhere should have a profound effect on the way future public policy for schooling and social service delivery is conceived and implemented.

The key to involvement of business with school leaders, elected officials, parents, and others starts with a return to a very old maxim. Toqueville first suggested that American democracy revolved around the idea of "self-interest, rightly understood." That same concept of using self-interest to prompt diverse groups to go beyond self-interest will be the key to rallying the broad consensus and public will necessary to proceed with radical structural reform of public education.

Individual incentives are at the root of self-interest: "What's in it for me?" And the incentives necessary to public school reform are evident for a variety of self-interested parties. What is needed today to effect more rapid change is the recognition on a personal basis of what educational reform can mean in the lives of those attending public schools.

The self-interest of business, defined in the short- or long-term, must lead it to play a central role in school reform. Whether a particular business is labor-intensive (and dependent on a large, quality workforce prepared to perform the tasks of reasoning and action for future jobs) or capital-intensive (and dependent on people qualified to engage intelligently

in deciding public issues), it needs education reform to ensure its success.

We now understand that Anglo-Americans are getting older, while birth rates are high among the younger, poorer and less powerful minority populations. As a result, these minority populations, concentrated in urban areas and bearing the brunt of poverty, make up a disproportionate share of "school households." Only 30 percent of American family units have any direct contact with the public schools. Children from these households are least likely to succeed in a public school system that is ill-prepared to cope with their needs.

Aging Anglos must be made to recognize that they have a great deal more in common with poor urban minority families than they may realize. The self-interest of the Anglo suburban population that is no longer in touch with the urban schools or any other schools will best be served when they recognize that their own quality of life in retirement may depend to a large extent on the qualifications of minority children to become self-sufficient and productive citizens, adequately prepared by the urban public schools for the jobs that will be available. If the retirement interests of aging Anglos are not sufficient to attract their attention, they need a view of what life will be like in America for their grandchildren if urban schools do not change. Business advocacy can facilitate communication of these realities to doubting and distant, aging Americans.

Not only elders but also all school employees should accept the idea that every child can learn and can be successful at high levels of academic achievement. Decentralized management and quality control focusing on the child regardless of her or his circumstances must be implemented in spite of the bureaucracy that now stifles creativity and innovation at the school

site and in the classroom and that precludes teachers from enjoying the professional respect and compensation most of them deserve.

Urban public school officials and teachers are discovering their self-interest in giving up some of their traditions in order to produce the new outcomes that external groups are demanding. Accountability through measurement of improved student achievement already is becoming the only acceptable standard for defining goals for urban public schools. The single task of educators is to empower their students through knowledge. Higher education, as well, will increasingly be held accountable for its role in public school reform, especially as it prepares teachers for the current world of increased expectations in a multicultural society.

Parents also have a self-interest in moving school reform forward. Naysayers who claim the lack of family interest as an explanation for poor student achievement have not talked to parents. Whatever their circumstances, few parents are content with a public school that does not promise a better future for their child.

The forces of poverty certainly have placed unconscionable numbers of families outside a system that has served the majority population so well. Many poor parents, who are exiled to a world of daily crisis so that they can secure basic human essentials, may doubt that the dominant system ever will serve their needs or their children's needs. But given opportunity and understanding, even very poor parents, including those who are limited in English proficiency, will surely choose success in school as a way of empowerment for their children and for themselves.

Students will discover their self-interest in education when they are motivated to do so, regardless of individual circumstances. As they grow

and progress, they will discover the value of learning to read, write, calculate, analyze, synthesize, and communicate in order to earn a life of self-sufficiency, achievement, and fulfillment. Business can help make this happen by emphasizing what is expected of a high school graduate and by placing greater value on the high school transcript and diploma as the entry point for any vocational path.

So there are positive incentives at every level of society to press for real school restructuring. No single individual or group, however, can bear the blame for the present bleak circumstances in urban public education. Likewise, singular individuals and groups by themselves will not be able to implement the structural reforms that now must be achieved. Everyone must be involved.

Americans always seem to wait for a crisis before they act. The decline in urban school quality is of crisis proportions. Thus far, we have had lots of reform rhetoric but little concrete effect. Several papers report on important new groups that have been formed nationally, in several states, and in nearly every city to focus on the imperative of urban school improvement. These groups are increasing the public awareness of what works, what is required for change, and why reform is urgent. The most recent business initiatives can help to fortify what is known about effective strategies for education reform, including those implemented through welfare, tax, and housing policies. Business groups should work as well to build a broad consensus for change among diverse groups of self-interested players.

We still see, however, the wasteful allocation of private resources and effort for incremental improvements to a failing educational system.

We still see the inappropriate commitment of corporate philanthropy to "feel good" programs that make little real difference in the educational achievement of individual students. And we still see business time and dollars devoted to programs that treat symptoms, rather than targeting resources to ameliorate the root causes of educational problems.

This failure is especially obvious at the public policy level, where coordinated social support services and interagency cooperation cannot seem to be achieved on a scale necessary to make a difference. National leaders have observed that government seems incapable of solving problems; it only subsidizes them. We are confronted with the fact that, in general, our society spends only 15 percent of its resources on prevention programs, and 85 percent for remedial measures that have proven largely ineffective in most social service areas.

More significantly, business has learned that advocacy for change may constitute in the long run its greatest contribution toward school improvement. If public schools expect that every student can and will succeed, business must expect that public policies will be established to allow the schooling process to improve. On the public policy level, several states have experienced success in passing important school reform legislation. Few of these measures have succeeded, however, without the active support and involvement of business leadership.

Peter Drucker, the management expert, has said that simply because of its own success, business will be expected to lead in the resolution of these urgent public problems. Knowing what works and knowing the structural reforms that are necessary will not be sufficient to change the urban public schools. Moving from theory to application requires sharply

focused commitments over a long time. As Drucker observes, everything must desolve into work if anything is to happen.

We have learned that business executives already are involved in building consensus among competing statewide and local groups to move the school reform agenda forward. Executives have discovered that gaining consensus through shared leadership among disparate groups is much more difficult and time consuming than moving business objectives forward within their own organizations. Hopefully, these business leaders will develop the framework among themselves and their successors to sustain the reform agenda over whatever period is required to institutionalize long-lasting improvements in student achievement.

Public/Private Ventures, a Philadelphia based group, has discovered several fundamental traits for the future of business involvement in school reform:

> The most significant contribution business can make to the reform effort will be its determination to work at strategic and systemic levels rather than the level of individual schools or programs; and to effect significant, lasting changes in the quality of training and public education, rather than marginal, localized and often short-lived programs; and,
>
> To develop a more realistic grasp of the magnitude and complexity of the problems, and a realization of the need for long-term commitment.

Businessmen, educators, community leaders, elected officials, and every self-interested group must alter the traditional understanding of "learning." We all should begin anew by redefining who the "customer" really is in the education process, that is, the individual child. Then we must serve that customer's particular needs. We must recognize the miracle that is possible in the interaction of one adult and one child. We must

realize that we are speaking of investment, not cost, and prevention, not cure. And we must get at it, and stick to it, or else we will bear responsibility for failing to guarantee the survival of our multicultural nation.

Socrates remarked many millennia ago: "Fellow citizens, why do you turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth, and take so little care of your children, to whom one day you must relinquish it all?" The same question is alive today. How will we respond?